WORKERS FIGHT
INTERNAL BULLETIN

No. 1 March 1972

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WORKERS FIGHT

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March 1943

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Comments on cde. Pam. Shank's draft pamphlet on Women's Liberation and Revolutionary Politics.

I think that there is a lot wrong with this pamphlet. Here I want to concentrate on the question of method. The fundamental message of Pam's pamphlet, if I have understood it, is this: the existing Women's Liberation Movement is bourgeois and reformist, because it understands things in terms of women vs men rather than women + men vs capitalism. Therefore it cannot mobilise working class women. What we need is women's groups, rooted in the working class, with a clear Marxist perspective, agitating on issues such as nurseries, housing, food prices, school milk, health services, equal pay etc. Therefore "Working class women must form their own groups and fight for sexual equality, socially and economically. We should not join the bourgeois WL movement, which is diametrically opposed to the interests of working women and the working class of which they form a part".

1) Is the existing WL movement bourgeois and reformist? In the sense that it isn't guided by Marxist theory, obviously yes - but so is everything else except the Revolutionary Party. Trade unions, for example, are bourgeois and reformist. So was the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign. So what? If we were evaluating the VSC or the WL movement as candidates for leadership for the working class struggle, it would be relevant to describe them as bourgeois as regards ideology. But they are not candidates.

Is the WL movement bourgeois in social composition? In fact it is largely petty-Bourgeois - fairly similar to VSC. We might prefer it otherwise. So what? Doubtless we would also prefer the social composition of "Workers' Fight" to be more proletarian.

We cannot judge a living, amorphous movement by abstract considerations of ideology and social composition. To do so is to demand that the mass movement proceed only through those gates we have set up for it. But "To imagine that social revolution is conceivable without revolts by small nations in the colonies and Europe, without the revolutionary outbursts of a section of the petty bourgeoisie with all its prejudices - to imagine that means repudiating social revolution...Whoever expects a 'pure' social revolution will never live to see it". (Lenin: The Discussion on Self-Determination Summed UP, 1916).

The real questions are: where the lines are drawn in class struggle, where does the movement find itself? Are its demands for or against the interests of the working class? does the movement tend to crack the domination of bourgeois ideology or consolidate it? Can the movement be developed as part of the struggle for socialism? On these criteria the WL movement cannot usefully be described as bourgeois. Certainly it may lead women into blind alleys and a false understanding of their oppression. Certainly there is a class struggle within the WL movement. But the outcome depends precisely upon the intervention of Marxists.

2) What is the function of a WL movement? To form awareness of and to fight the specific oppression of women, derived from the structure of the bourgeois family and the ideology of "a woman's place is in the home" etc. It is necessary to fight this oppression and ideology: because they are obstacles to the united mobilisation of the working class. It is necessary to organise to fight, because any ideology which has gained a hold in the mass of the population becomes a material force which can be ousted not simply by verbal denunciation, but only through the activity of the people involved.

Having decided this, to demand as a precondition for the WL movement that it should adopt a Marxist, class-struggle perspective
is utterly sectarian. If we are really concerned to fight male
chauvinism, then we must be clear that we support women fighting
male chauvinism, Marxist or not. Of course, we argue within the
WL movement for a Marxist perspective.

The method of Pan's pamphlet is thoroughly idealist. She
presents a sketch of, on one hand, the WL movement as it is at
present, and, on the other, the sort of WL movement we would like
to build. I think we would all agree with the general spirit of
these sketches, notwithstanding various crudities and inaccuracies.
But what is Pan's practical conclusion? That we should reject
the unpleasing reality and construct our ideal! But what we have
to do is not construct movements from idealist blueprints - but to
work with the raw material actually at hand - to develop the
existing movement.

To avoid misunderstanding - I am not saying that there are not
circumstances in which we split from WL groups which have become
utterly degenerate, petty-bourgeois talking shops. It is a question,
however, of the possibilities of development of each group, not of
condemning them on their failure to measure up to an abstract norm
here and now.

3) My own view is that our political attitude to the WL move-
ment should be the same as the line of the IMG and 'Socialist
Women'. They have avoided both Pan's sectarianism - and, on the
other hand, the passive adaptation of the US Socialist Workers'
Party, summed up in the slogan 'The best socialist is the best
feminist'.

Martin Thomas.

On the Labour Party

1) Why ever support Labour? Not because Labour is "the only
real alternative to the Tories". Not because the majority of the
working class still support the Labour Party. If it was as simple
as that, we would be obliged to support the US Democratic Party
against the US Republican Party - but US Trotskyists have always
insisted that the Democratic Party is a capitalist party, and
merely a working class support.

The orthodox reason for voting Labour is that the Labour Party
is based on the working class, whereas the Democratic Party is not.
But active working class participation in the LP is very small, and
the trade unions are a very important financial/electoral prop of
the DP. The classification by which the LP is a workers' party,
although a bourgeois 'workers' party, while the DP is out-and-out
bourgeois, seems to owe more to theology than to historical
materialism.

The point, I think, is that the LP has a "valve connection" with
the labour movement. It has in its structure (relation with trade
unions etc) and in some elements of its ideology, the form of a
party (cis) representing the working class. Class militancy can in
some periods flood through the valves and find expression (and
frustration) within it. Working class militants can (and in fact
do) look on it as their party - its leadership in alien hands, but
basically their party. Nothing like that is possible with the DP
- the labour movement relates to it only as a client.

It is incorrect to make a blanket statement that the LP cannot
be bypassed. If there is ever to be a revolution, large sections
of the working class must move directly from non-involvement in
political life to revolutionary political activity, without an
intermediate state of Labourist political activity. But this
by-passing' itself depends on the breaking from the LP of sections of the working class who are involved with the LP and cannot bypass it. The hold of the LP should not be discounted simply because very few workers expect Wilson to achieve much. The hold of the LP may be expressed by unwillingness to see political activity outside the LP as viable as well as actual involvement in the LP.

One historian (G. Dangerfield: 'The Strange Death of Liberal England') explains the simultaneous large rise of Union membership and equally large disaffection with the Union leaderships around 1911 as follows: "The great strikes almost invariably began in the seaports, among non-union labourers, who, once the battle was joined, would flock to the Unions as soldiers might flock to an idle fortification, and force its somnolent commanders to do their bidding. The Union leaders, trembling for their power, hastened to obey. Those who were agile enough pushed their way to the fore, just as if they had always been there; others stood apart, bewildered, nortified and helpless, while unknown leaders took their place in everything but name". The 'working-class' character of the LP consists in the possibility of the working class "flocking to the idle fortifications".

To take up the 'fortification' analogy - the LP is a fortification built by the working class, but facing the wrong way (tangentially the wrong way, not diametrically the wrong way like the LP), and utterly immobile. (The trade unions, one might say, face the right way, but suffer from being immobile; purely defensive). The commanders, moreover, are not 'somnolent' - they are actively cooperating with the commanders of the capitalist fortifications. We are engaged in building the foundations of a new fortification, mobile and facing in the right direction. There are many workers convinced of the necessity to fight the capitalists - many, moreover, convinced of the shortcomings of the fortifications provided by the LP. If we had new fortifications, they might organise behind them - but building the foundations is a different matter. If we are to propose that masses of workers move into action, we must also point out organisational forms within which they can move into action. To take a trade union analogy - in North Staffs and probably elsewhere, Gormley was completely 'exposed' to the miners active in strike meetings and on pickets. Still it was necessary to put demands on Gormley - because Gormley was still the 'commander' of the 'fortification'.

We can and must win individual militants to the task of building new foundations - but we must also enable them to connect with the mass of the workers, particularly with the mass anti-Tory struggles of the working class.

If workers see the need for a workers' government (while not being clear about what this means) - we can't say "Workers' Fight to Power" or "Sorry, lads, you'll have to wait until the revolutionary party is stronger" - what we have to say is that they should use their existing mass organisations - the trade unions and the mass party based on the trade unions, ie the Labour Party.

If you like, we must call workers to the fortifications - as a start to then organising themselves in squads which can be used to build the new fortifications. However, we don't call on workers, at present, to join the LP or canvass for Labour - which would involve then in replacing the fallen and broken stones in the misplaced LP fortifications - we call on them to vote Labour and to apply pressure on Labour through the trade unions.

2) The current state of the LP. The broad outlines here are well-known and uncontroversial. 1) During the post-war boom class
struggle became fragmented, active participation in the LP dropped, aesthetic and cynical attitudes to the LP increased. 2) In 1964-70 and probably in a future Government, the LP has had to attack the unions forthrightly. Active working class participation in the LP has dropped drastically since 1964. 3) The TU leadership are far more in the centre of the class struggle than the LP leaders. 4) Nevertheless the working class has not superseded the LP. The working class LP vote is as solid as ever. Credibility of Wilson and Benn at UCS etc shows that the working class still identifies LP as alternative to the Tories.

3) Labour to Power with Socialist Policies is an old favourite slogan. But suppose you call 'L to P with S P' and Labour comes to power and puts old age pensions up 50 p. A worker expresses satisfaction at this - you reply "But that isn't what we meant by Socialist Policies." "What did you mean by Socialist Policies, then?". You explain about socialised economy, workers' control, etc. "Oh, that! But you can't expect the Labour Party to do that!"

The reason why we put forward transitional demands as well as maximum demands is not that they are more readily accepted. The transitional demand of workers' militias, for example, is far less readily accepted, in almost any circumstances, than the maximum demand of 'socialism'. The reason is that a transitional demand can mean something in terms of an immediate programme of action for militants - a maximum demand tells noone - whether they accept it or not - anything about want to do here and now.

The problem with 'L to P with S P' is similar to the problem with maximum demands. The term 'socialist policies' has been so battered and misused by demagogues that it means nothing.

4) The IS line is to call for Labour to Power + a list of six demands: repeal of the IRP and all anti-union measures; no incomes policy under capitalism; restoration of all welfare services and no welfare charges; work or full maintenance at trade union rates for the unemployed; renationalisation without compensation of all industries sold off by the present government.

What is mainly wrong with this, I think, is the way it has been put - "We have no illusions that a Labour government would actually put such a programme into practice. But the mass of workers who still look to Labour as the alternative to the Tories will be prepared to fight through the unions to impose such demands on the LP. In the process they will see how opposed to their interests the Labour leaders are and learn how their strength as a class can be used to implement such demands" (SW 6 March 1971). But surely if the Labour Party doesn't put the programme into practice, the workers who pressed for the programme will learn how "their strength as a class" can fail "to implement such demands"! It is pointless to say to workers: "Let's launch a campaign to put demands on Labour - of course this campaign will be defeated, but the experience will be good for you". The correct approach, I think, is to say "we must campaign round these demands: Part of the campaign will be pressure on the LP leaders to carry out the demands: the people we draw into the struggle by the demands on the LP leaders can be won over to our independent campaign when the LP leaders fail". It is essential that independent campaigning round the demands is carried out, that an actual alternative, however embryonic, to the LP is presented. The IS approach doesn't recognise this: the six demands are put in a "wouldn't it be nice if..." fashion. Perm two from six, perhaps ....

The IMG and also people inside IS criticise the IS line as
expressing right-wing deviations and concessions to Labourism. This
criticism, in my view, is completely misplaced. If, for the sake of
being 'realistic', IS was confining itself to demands on the LP which
have a 'reasonable chance' of being satisfied, then IS would be
restricting itself within the limits of capitalism, and, indeed,
deviating to the right - it would be holding back the working class,
by failing to pose any real solutions to problems such as unemploy-
ment. But is IS confining itself to 'realistic' demands, on this
issue? Work or full pay - hands off the unions - are these
reformist objectives? The IMG and the IS oppositionists are only
showing that they see revolutionary agitation as a matter of being
"redder than red".

The IMG line is for a "Workers' Government based on the trade
unions". Presumably this is a demand for a political organ of the
trade unions to take power. Well, there is a political organ of the
trade unions - it's called the Labour Party. Actually the IMG line
is just the old "U to P" with S.P line, only put so obscurely that
no one can understand it.

The idea behind the IMG's mystagogy is easy to see - they base
themselves on the undisputed fact that the TU leaders are at present
more central to the class struggle than the LP leaders. But if the
working class can't bypass the LP, certainly the TU leaders can't.

5) "Heath Out" is currently the most popular slogan on working
class demonstrations. Even workers so backward as to be against
the miners will support the idea of kicking the Tories out. What we
must do is build on this feeling. In two ways: 1) what we must do
to kick out the Tories; 2) after the Tories, what? It is necessary
not to be silent (like SW, mostly) on the second question: whenever
we leave a gap, bourgeois ideology (in this case, Labourism) will
fill the gap.

Our line should be - to centre our agitation round two main
slogans, hammered home week after week - "hands off the unions" and
"work or full pay". We should break these slogans down into more
precise demands, as I have tried to do for "Work or Full Pay" in the
centre page article in WF no 1. The main emphasis should be on
building a movement within the unions for these demands. And we
should stress that it is by building such a movement and winning
victories such as the miners' that the Tories will be forced out.
We shouldn't leave it as just "kick out the Tories" - nor should we
put Labour as the alternative in terms of "Well, it looks as if we'll
have to make do with Labour". The slogan should be "Tories Out -
Labour to Power, and prepare to fight" - with the "prepare to fight"
made concrete by reference to the slogans "Hands Off the Unions"
and "Work or Full Pay". Because of the current state of the LP,
the emphasis should be more on the struggle in the unions than the
struggle in the LP.

Martin Thomas.
The ING document by MT is, on the whole, good. However, there are just one or two points which must be rethought before appearing in such a document for general circulation.

1) It seems to me that the necessary interrelations between class based industrial work and single issue campaigns is not brought out clearly. In certain periods, single issue campaigns can attract people from predominantly petty bourgeois milieu. In these circumstances it is necessary to pursue such campaigns and work in such milieus, drawing such elements towards us, after with little chance of success in the class as a whole. People won from such campaigns must be turned towards class based work both during such a campaign (if it's of any duration, of course) and after it. But during the campaign we would probably have such comrades doing most of their work on the particular campaign, being the most resolute.

The point is that Comrade T. has looked for a neat solution to a complex problem. Precisely because the contradictions of capitalism manifest themselves on so many fronts, having different tempos of development, first one aspect coming to the fore, then the other, it is necessary for us to fight on all fronts seeking, wherever possible, to unite them concretely. We don't want Chinese walls between solidarity work, women's work, student work, industrial work etc., but we also have to realise that it is necessary sometimes to concentrate for a period predominantly on the appropriate milieu for the particular movement, campaign etc., not automatically being able to relate it directly to our industrial work except to make the obvious propaganda calls for solidarity.

Because of a somewhat one-sided view of single issue campaigns, I feel that Com. T. has tended to carve out a somewhat special case for a particular section which has often lately been involved in such campaigns, students, when faced with the fact of student mobilisation. In being over sharp in response to the studentism of the ING, INGish errors are committed!!!

Firstly we are told (P.7)

"And intensifying the sectional militancy of this or that section of the population - let alone students - does not lead to socialist consciousness."

This is indisputable. If sectional militancy remains as such. But, the task of revolutionaries is to intensify the struggle on whichever front it erupts as a means to opening up the sections concerned to socialism, to relate in struggle the partial to the total. Otherwise we leave the intensification of the sectional struggle towards other forces, abandon the field and either become sterile sectarianists or lionisers of those struggling. This comes out in the almost out of hand rebuttal of the Youth Vanguard Thesis and the implications of this rejection.

It seems to me that the concrete application of the youth (or student, really) vanguard theory by the ING, and perhaps certain other sections of the MGT, does not invalidate the more or less theoretical correctness of the theory at the time it was posd. Com. T. has mentioned the background to the student upsurge and spelled out more or less adequately the change in the objective position of students in the last period. This new position, given the developing crisis of capitalism internationally want that not only could large numbers of students be won for revolutionary socialism while the same of the class, for the time being remain tied to its existing leaderships, but that, in certain circumstances, student struggles could precipitate mass workers' struggles which posed the question of power, or at least shock the state to its foundations. (the famous 'detonator' effect) e.g., France, Argentina, Mexico, Pakistan. The limitations of the student movement are that their struggles then, as now, in the absence of the class taking power, are temporary phenomena. Even socialist student movements, as such, are inevitably short lived (witness the decline of the 768) Students are not a class and are certainly not homogeneous politically, most still being under the domination of bourgeois ideology, which reasserts itself once the temporary struggles have passed, and "normal" relations are re-established. In this environment, individual students are like corks on the waves - unless assimilated into a revolutionary workers' organisation.

But because of his one sided rejection of the student vanguard thesis, Com. T. has fallen precisely into one of the traps he set out to avoid. He real (P.13)

"...students, though (except for a small minority) not engaged in producing new ideas, have as a result of their work, (my emphasis, P.S.) a certain critical awareness to the
extent of being conscious of the problems posed to itself (themselves) by bourgeois ideology (my emphasis). This can at best be only partially true. Students are steeped in bourgeois methods of thought and analysis before coming to college. They are still predominantly from middle class back rounds and in spite of having specific student problems, bourgeois ideology is re-inforced via the academy. Students only become aware of "the problems posed to themselves by bourgeois ideology! to the extent that bourgeois myths built up and taken seriously by students become exposed in practice by the contradictions of their own life situation together with, more importantly, the progress of the class struggle on a national and international plane. Such students are a minority where ranks are swelled and diminished as particular struggles rise and fall.

Another point is to get a counterposition between "political education" and a bigger and better "confrontations!". This would tend to give us a selective approach to students. For although students have been trained to study (though not very well), although revolutionaries must challenge bourgeois ideas in their most sinister forms (as embodied in the academic subjects) to expose them before student audiences; although revolutionary propaganda must be parleyed through the Socialist Societies, political education must be seen as related (a) to the students own struggles, however partial and (b) to the need to orient students to the class; precisely to concretise their abstract notions, to get to grips with bourgeois ideology in its living embodiment in the class as part of the process of actuating the historical potential of the class.

Finally we are told "In the era when the bourgeoisie was the rising class, they tended to follow the bourgeoisie, in the present era, when the proletariat is the rising class, they tend to follow the proletariat." This is a fantastic blanket statement in regard to today's students. Certainly they could not now be used as strike breakers lab 1936 (a time when the proletariat was the rising class, if we follow Lenin's analysis), but if by "follow" is meant "uphold the historical interests," this is to put students on a pedestal. This would make the "intel University" slogan of the USFI easily realisable, as opposed to being a temporary slogan which may have summarised the drive of the students upsurge in the 1968/9 period. Personally, I don't think it was appropriate, but it was certainly not stupid.)

2) The International. I find the remarks about 'aboiion' particularly one sided. The International never adopted the perspective of "centuries of deformed and degenerated workers' states." This was, I believe, first raised by E. H. Carr (Cochran) in the States and advanced by Cable tentatively, but was never adopted by the International. Insofar as Cable exaggerated a particular role in the International, this may be significant, especially in regard to entwined as a "way of life", China etc. But it seems to me that document in required on this. Dogmatic bluster is just not good enough and will prove counter-productive.

Phil Camp
1. GEC

The Situation

1) There are GEC factories in most areas. Also BAC is owned 40% by GEC.

2) The main thing about GEC is Weinstock's shake-out policy, getting ready for competition with Siemens and Philips in the EEC. His methods are the usual: closures, actual sackings, redeployment and natural wastage. Hanging over each factory is insecurity and many rumours.

3) The merger between GEC, AMI and English Electric has brought about this rationalisation but the workers at factory level do not seem to associate themselves as GEC workers - they still think in terms of the old structure. The combine committee has been ineffective. Each factory is isolated by the management.

4) The main things to fight for today are:

   a) In some areas, basic TU consciousness as a self-defence against sackings.
   b) Joint shop stewards committees linking staff and shopfloor.
   c) Area shop stewards committees.
   d) A strong and effective Combine Committee.

5) Overriding all else, must be the driving home of the political points - what Weinstock is doing - how it is linked to the government strategy - unemployment - productivity deals - the EEC etc.

Our Involvement

1) At the moment MT in Stoke is doing a GEC bulletin with the local IMG. There is an IMG branch in Stafford where there is a large GEC plant.

2) In Coventry, the WF comrades are still negotiating with IS on the GEC bulletin which covers 8 factories in the area. We used to help run the bulletin, the GEC contacts are still friendly, have brought our paper and the IS people running the thing are anti-Cliff.

3) In Birmingham and Northampton there are GEC plants which IS have done no work around. Comrades are trying to make contact with workers by selling our papers.

4) In Bristol BAC is 40% owned by GEC and might well be completely taken over by them.

5) In Lancaster there is a GEC factory with possibilities.

PROPOSALS

1) Comrades use articles in the WF paper to make contact with GEC workers.

2) When contacts are made, news from them should be submitted to the paper and/or (if only snipets) to DS.

3) DS to collect and collate information and produce a duplicated printed bulletin every 2 months.

4) This bulletin can be used: (a) to give to contacts (b) as a basis for local bulletins (c) when sufficient contacts gained nationally to produce a R&F paper.

DS.

STEEL.

The first issue of Real Steel News made a great impact. A letter was written to it by a local steelworker within days of it being distributed. Copies sent to Derbyshire met with a very favourable response from steelworkers there.

We are gradually building up contacts and support and are aiming to have a printed bulletin when the time is ripe.
The three largest printing unions (SOGAT, NGA, NATSOPA) have submitted to the employers a wage claim ranging from £4 to £7 per week, representing a percentage increase on basic rates of between 20% and 35%. The position to date, is that the employers have offered a maximum payment of £2 per week for craft workers (10.4%) with lesser amounts to semi-skilled and non-skilled workers of roughly 9%, still within the government's credibility wage norm.

All print unions have rejected this latest offer from the employers.

The NGA have issued directives to their members to adopt a policy of non-cooperation with their employers and have also commenced an overtime ban, as a means of applying pressure in pursuit of their wage claim.

The SOGAT leadership appear to be uncertain as to what action (if any) they are prepared to recommend to their members.

NATSOPA surprisingly are quite happy; at this stage, to follow SOGAT's inactivity.

Industrial action is the only positive weapon left open to the print union leadership. The alternative would be some form of compromise with the employers - e.g. £4 per week increase, spread over two years with back pay to January 1st 1972, plus, possibly two days extra holiday per year thrown in.

The employers would claim a victory within the government's wages norm and the print union leadership would also claim a victory of a £4 a week wage increase, backdated plus extra holidays as a bonus.

If such a compromise solution is reached it will be necessary for the union leadership to present it in a favourable light and recommend acceptance. Every print wage increase over the past eighteen years which the national leadership has recommended has been accepted by the rank and file, simply because no alternative solution has been presented.

The printworker's bulletin must campaign against any solution. We must be in a position to expose factually the leadership's squalid agreement with the employers. To do this it is essential that any printworker contacts that we may have nationally are encouraged to send along to me all press cuttings and current documents relating to the wage claim which may be circulating in their area.

Print Faction.

If the print fraction is to grow nationally, it is imperative that a print information clearing-house be set up.

The print union leadership function so effectively (relatively speaking) simply because of their policy of starving the rank and file of information. This policy of manufacturing apathy entrenches their own power base.

To defeat that policy the above recommendation must be put into operation, in order that the bulletin can reproduce and expose any compromise deals between the unions and employers, whether at national or local level. Contacts should be encouraged to send to me all documents, whether national or local, on - conference reports, productivity deals, overtime agreements, redundancy agreements, wage agreements, machine manning agreements, any national or local committee reports. No matter how outdated the above documents may be they can be very useful.

London, being the headquarters of all the print unions, is a special target, therefore our efforts must be concentrated there.

Manchester Printworker.

The February issue has increased in size and is an improvement on previous issues. We have been forced to make a charge of 2p per copy. There had been some doubts that we would be able to sell the bulletin at 2p. These fears have been proved unfounded. 280 copies have been sold to printworkers in Manchester. The issue is now sold out. Letters have been received informing the group of the extreme difficulty of obtaining a copy. We have also been informed that copies have been passed around in factories, such is the interest in the new bulletin.
Newspaper Printworkers.

The Printworkers Rank & File has recruited two newspaper workers, who have been encouraged by the bulletin. It is possible that two editions may have to be published in future. One for the newspaper workers and one for the general public.

In conclusion, I repeat that all print contacts should be encouraged to get in touch with me. We have print contacts now in Manchester, Glasgow, Northampton and Liverpool. We await London with confidence.

GD

STUDENTS.

The main national development concerning students since my report to the January NC has been the development of the LCSU. This is a left fraction in the NUS dominated by the IMG and IS. On a local level LCSU consists of affiliated Soes Societies and Student Unions - of course we support it. We have not been involved in its national organisation except to the extent that GW attended the LCSU meeting on 4 Feb.

There has been a dispute inside the LCSU on orientation - the IMG stressing the question of Ireland, the IS stressing "economic" issues of students' conditions etc. It follows clearly from our position on students (and on Ireland) that we support the IMG on this point. The main fault with the IMG's perspective is a tendency to adventurism and over-excitability - e.g. illusions about 'forcing the issue' of student union autonomy by militant confrontation.

STUDENT PERSPECTIVES.

Our basic analysis of the student upsurge considers students as a grouping without a class position in the process of production. The political movements of the student population, and fractions of the student population, are principally derivatives of more deep rooted social movements. Because of the volatility and ideological sensitivity of the student population, however, the student movement movement does not develop in step with or mechanically parallel to the working class movement. It can move ahead at times, it is therefore necessary to adopt a sensitive and flexible attitude, without any subordination of the student movement to "working class" phrasemongering.

The militant student movement, in its brief heyday (1967/1969) was dominated by the concept of confrontation politics. As soon as university administrations had acquired skill and experience in dealing with student unrest, they were able to smash the initial upsurge through soothing by stonewalling and through energetic repression and victimisation.

The situation is now more one of student militancy developing in the wake of working class militancy, than of students being the vanguard. The biggest current issues in student politics have been Union autonomy (seen as linked with the T&H) and the miners' strike, new sections (the 'lower' sections of higher education) not involved in the earlier upsurge have been drawn in.

The current relationship of forces is as follows: 1) The Government is a severe attack on students (chiefly via plans for the student unions). This is intended as a direct attack on the influence of revolutionary ideas as much as a money-saving exercise. 2) The NUS, during the 1967/69 upsurge, was simply anti-student. With Jack Straw and Digby Jacks as presidents it has, however moved. NUS is now prepared to engage in a certain amount of demagogy and militancy on 'student unionist' issues, in order to bring student unrest within its channels.

The crucial question for Marxists is not just to go along with the general low-level militancy, with the only prospects being either a return to the 1970 cycle of confrontation - defeat - generalisation, or complete domination by the NUS reformists - but to build a core (no more is reasonably possible) of politically conscious students. A good step towards this has been made by the IMG-IS organised Liaison Committee for the Defence of Student Unions. The tactic must be to orientate LCSU and LCSU-affiliated Societies to political issues of Ireland, of solidarity with workers' struggles - in opposition to 'student economism' - but without isolating militant minorities in flamboyant but adventurist activism.
The struggle on the docks has turned out to be - as we anticipated at the end of last year - centred around the NDLs and the Unattached Register. However events have unfolded a lot slower than we thought. The employers strategy is still to solve the 'surplus labour' problem by putting men on the unattached register and their target is still in the long run the NDLs. There are unconfirmed reports about leading port employers having meetings with Carr to sort out the legal and parliamentary ramifications of scrapping the scheme.

From the dockers' point of view all is not going well. The main problem is one of a national leadership and national unity. The only possibility of national leadership lies with the National Shop Stewards Committee. The CP plays the leading role here and there has been a complete failure to explain the issues to the mass of dockworkers and to agitate around the nine-point programme. The other problem is duality of the ports, which are all working under different agreements (this was part of the purpose of Phase II). Hull and London are bearing the brunt of the attack on the unattached register front. Hull has gone in for some daft scheme a la UCS, Southampton (where we are informed the only militant shop steward has resigned) is very dodgy as far as national action is concerned, in Manchester the Shop Stewards do as little as they can get away with (also Manchester has just agreed to a bad Phase II deal), which leaves Liverpool and London. London wants action just around the unattached register issue, Liverpool say they don't want to come out for peanuts but for the full nine demands.

At the last NSSC there was talk of a national strike. The situation will be clearer after the weekend of 11/12 March when the NSSC is meeting again in Southampton.

**WF Activity**

700 copies of the last issue of the Hook were produced and distributed as follows:

- Manchester - the bulk of our sales are here.
- Runcorn - 40 sold by a contact.
- Preston - 50 sold by a contact.
- Bristol - 20 or so sold on the gates.
- Liverpool - a couple sold to shop stewards on a recent strike.
- Swansea - no report.
- Teeside - " " "
- London - " " "
- Hull - " " "

"Workers Fight" is sold regularly at Manchester, Preston and Bristol.

Proposals: The Hook comes out once every two months in printed form. We prepare a docks pamphlet.

**AUTO COMPONENTS**

The faction is not functioning at all well - partly because a lack of perspective for the different areas we are trying to cover, but also because of ineffective work in the areas we are covering.

We are trying to develop activity in:

- Leyland - BTR Rubber
- Bolton - Automotive products
- Steyr - Michelin Rubber; tyres
- Liverpool - Automotive products
- Manchester - Small + Parkes
- Chapel-en-le-Frith - Ferodoros

Our connection with all of these factories is tenuous - consisting either of a few contacts or selling papers.

SC
1. **MEMBERSHIP**

The fundamental condition for membership of Workers Fight is proletarian class consciousness. Concretely this means that members must:

i) Agree with and be committed to defend the basic aims and programme of the organisation, as laid down in "What is a Party Member?".

ii) Engage in regular political activity under the discipline of the organisation.

iii) Be a member of their appropriate trade union. If there is no trade union at a member's place of work, then he or she should, if possible (from the point of view of victimisation etc.), attempt to form a union branch.

iv) Sell "Workers Fight" regularly, especially at their place of work, if this is possible.

v) Commit themselves to developing an understanding of the theory and traditions of revolutionary communism, as laid out in the basic education programme.

2. **CANDIDATE MEMBERSHIP**

The conditions of membership must not only be adhered to by means of verbal agreement but also in reality. For this reason new members will, as a general rule, join Workers Fight as candidate members.

i) Candidate members have all the rights and duties of a full member except that they do not have the right to vote, either at national or branch level.

ii) New members are admitted as candidate members either by a collective decision of the branch they are to join or by the NC.

iii) Normally a candidate member is expected to go through the basic education programme with a full member of Workers Fight, before being admitted to full membership.

iv) There shall be no formal time limit on the period of candidate membership.

3. **FULL MEMBERSHIP**

A candidate member who has satisfied his fellow comrades that he has fulfilled the conditions of membership shall become a full member.

i) Full members shall be elected either by their branch or by the NC.

ii) Have a responsibility to play an active role in the decision making processes of the organisation through the following channels:

4. **NATIONAL AGGREGATE.**

The National Aggregate is the supreme policy making body of Workers Fight.

i) The National Aggregate shall be convened every six months.

ii) Every member has a right and a duty to attend and to speak.

iii) Every member or group of members (i.e. branches, NC, factions, factions can submit resolutions and amendments to the Aggregate.

iv) Resolutions and amendments must be submitted in writing to the National Secretary before the date laid down in the Aggregate time-table.

vi) The SC is responsible for convening and arranging the Aggregate.

vii) Non-members can only attend by invitation of the NC or the Aggregate itself.

viii) Minutes of the aggregate must be produced and circulated to all members not more than one month after the aggregate.
5. NATIONAL OFFICERS

The Aggregate shall elect the following national officers:

i) Chairman, who will chair both the following aggregate and the NC meetings.

ii) Editor of "Workers Fight," who has overall responsibility for the production, distribution and, within the limits laid down by the Aggregate and the NC, the political line of the paper.

iii) National Secretary, who is responsible for:
Communication between the NC, SC, branches and fractions.
Correspondence not covered by the Workers Fight Editor and Treasurer.
Preparing for and convening SC meetings.
Keeping an up-to-date file of membership reports, correspondence, minutes etc.
Acting as an administrative secretary to the NC and SC.

iv) National Treasurer who is responsible for:
Keeping up to date accounts of the organisation's finances.
Collecting subscriptions from the branches.
Authorising routine expenditures.
Presenting financial reports to the NC and Aggregate.

6. NATIONAL COMMITTEE

The NC is responsible for the overall political decision making of Workers Fight in between aggregates.

i) It shall consist of the four national officers plus six other members.

ii) Shall be elected by the Aggregate.

iii) All, as a general rule, be bound by the decisions of the aggregate. Changes in the objective situation are the only criteria for reversing aggregate decisions. If, in between aggregates, events occur that are thought by the NC to necessitate a change of line then the NC will have to account for this to the branches.

iv) The NC shall meet monthly.

v) The NC meetings will be convened and prepared for by the SC.

vi) Any member, branch, sub-committee, fraction or faction can submit a resolution to the NC. These must be sent to the National Secretary before the deadline for resolutions.

vii) Every branch may send an observer to the NC meetings.

viii) The NC shall report as a whole to the aggregate. A minority report can be given by members who are in disagreement with the NC report.

ix) Minutes of NC meetings shall be made available to all members of Workers Fight.

7. STEERING COMMITTEE

The SC is responsible for the day to day implementation of NC decisions; for reacting to events that occur unexpectedly and require immediate action; for political leadership; for the routine administrative and organisational running of Workers Fight.

i) The SC shall be elected by the NC and not responsible to the NC.

ii) It shall consist of the National Secretary and not less than three other NC members.

iii) It shall report monthly to the NC.

8. SUB-COMMITTEES

The NC shall elect the following sub-committees, which do not necessarily have to consist of NC members, but which must include at least one NC member.

i) Financial sub-committee - to include the treasurer.
ii) "Workers Fight" Editorial Board - to include the Editor and one comrade to be elected by the NC as business manager.

iii) RCR Editorial Board - to include one member, elected by the NC, as editor.

iv) Publications sub-committee - to be responsible for approving all other publications besides WF and RCR.

9. BRANCHES

The geographical unit of Workers Fight is the branch. Branches are responsible for the political activity of Workers Fight in a particular area and for the political education of their members, especially candidate members.

i) Branches will be recognised according to the experience, reliability, consciousness and number of members in a particular locality.

ii) Only the aggregate or the NC can ratify the existence of a branch.

iii) Branches can be subdivided either geographically or functionally into cells, but a strictly internal meeting of the whole branch must be held at least monthly.

iv) Only a full branch meeting can elect new members and full members.

v) Branches should send regular reports and minutes of internal meetings to the National Secretary.

vi) Branches should elect:

- A Secretary - to be responsible for communication with the National Secretary, membership of the branch, informing the national secretary of new members.
- A Treasurer - to be responsible for collecting subscriptions and sending them to the National Treasurer.
- A paper organiser - to be responsible for ordering, distributing, organising sales and paying for the paper.

(If the branch is divided into geographical cells then each cell should elect these officers)

10. FRACTIONS

Fractions are the organisations of Workers Fight which co-ordinate and initiate nationally activity in a particular industry, union or company.

i) Fractions are ratified by the Aggregate or by the NC.

ii) The Aggregate or the NC shall elect a convenor for each fraction.

iii) Each fraction shall be subdivided, on a geographical basis, into cells. The cells to keep in regular contact with the convenors.

iv) Fraction convenors shall report to the NC.

11. INTERNAL BULLETIN

The internal bulletin will serve as an instrument for:

a) Promoting theoretical and political discussion within the group.

b) Providing a means of generalising on the lessons that have been learnt from activity in a particular area, industry, union etc.

c) Playing an organising and centralising role in national campaigns.

To this end:

i) The IB shall be produced at least once every two months.

ii) The NC shall elect an IB editor, who will be responsible for commissioning articles, production and distribution.
111) The editor has no right to refuse for publication any article submitted before the deadline, but he can ask for a contribution and/or labour towards production for articles over 2000 words.

iv) The IB or its contents shall not in any way be communicated to non-members.

12. DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

i) The branches can suspend a member, who can appeal to the NC against the suspension.

ii) Only the Aggregate and the NC can expel a member.

iii) If any member's expulsion is to be proposed at the NC then that member must be notified at least two weeks in advance and have the opportunity to defend himself.

iv) Any member who is expelled by the NC can appeal to the Aggregate, whose decision is final.

v) Re-admitting a previously expelled member requires the approval of the NC or the aggregate.

13. FACTIONS

Any group of members have a right to form a faction to fight for a particular point of view within the organisation.

i) The conditions of membership for members of factions differ in no way from the conditions laid out in section 1 of the constitution.

ii) Factions can produce their own publications for circulation within the organisation; can hold meetings to put over their position; can put up members for elections on a faction platform.

iii) In any dispute between a faction and the SC or NC, then both the faction and the SC or NC have equal rights to use the organisation's apparatus.

iv) A faction must not carry its platform outside the organisation without permission of the Aggregate or the NC.

14. THE CONSTITUTION

The Constitution can only be changed by an Aggregate.

• Add to section 1:

vi) Pay a regular subscription, as laid down by the Aggregate.

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